

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

An interview is solicited.

Withdrawn claims 11-15 are cancelled. Withdrawn claim 19 remains pending as it depends from claim 16 which is under examination.

Claim 21 is new.

A review of the present invention may prove helpful. Reference is made to the specification beginning at page 14 and to the drawing figures. As illustrated by Figure 1, the invention provides a child car seat 1 provided with a base 2, and a seat main body 3 supported by the base 2.

As shown in Figures 2 to 4, the base 2 is provided with a lower base portion 10 and an upper base portion 20. A connection bolt 15 is attached to the recess portion 14a of the lower base portion 10, and the connection bolt 15 passes through the base portions 10 and 20 and is screwed into a nut 23 within the recess portion 22a. Accordingly, the upper and lower base portions 10 and 20 are connected so as to freely turn around the connection bolt 15. Therefore, as shown in Figures 5A to 5C, the upper base portion 20 turns with respect to the lower base portion 10 so as to invert a direction of the upper base portion 20 in a longitudinal direction of a vehicle.

The claims have been amended consistent with the disclosure, e.g., claim 1 is amended as follows:

a base provided with a lower base portion to be mounted on a seat of a vehicle, and with an upper base portion mounted, via a connection, to be lower base portion so as to freely turn with respect to the lower base portion, the connection connecting the upper and lower base portions so that the upper base portion is repositionable with respect to the lower base portion from a first position where the upper base is facing a first direction to a second position where the upper base is facing a 180 degrees opposite second direction in such a manner ~~as to invert that~~ repositioning the upper base portion from the first position to the second position reverses an orientation of the upper base portion with respect to the lower base portion and, when the base is mounted in on the seat of the vehicle, a longitudinal direction of the vehicle.

With respect to claim 9, please see the that invention, as shown in Figure 8, improves impact resistance with a head protecting portion 4g of the side wall portion 4c formed so as to have such a depth that the head portion of a baby is approximately covered, and an arm rest portion 4h of the side wall portion 4c is formed so as to be higher toward a front end 4i of the shell 4, whereby knees of the baby are approximately covered.

Claim 9 has been amended consistent with this disclosure.

As shown in Figure 1, a belt fixing apparatus 40 is provided near a boundary between the seat portion 4a and the back portion 4b in the shell 4. The belt fixing apparatus 40 is not fixed to the shell 4, but is supported by the upper base portion 20 via a bridge 50. Figure 6 is a cross sectional view of a state in which the bridge 50 is taken off, and Figure 8 is a perspective view corresponding thereto. As is apparent from these drawings, a recess portion 4d for mounting the bridge is formed near a boundary between the seat portion 4a and the back portion 4b in the shell 4, and a belt through hole 4e for inserting and passing the seat belt therethrough is formed in the side wall portion 4c in such a manner as to communicate with the recess portion 4d.

New claim 21 is supported by the above.

The claims have been amended to remedy the stated bases of rejection under Section 112, 2nd paragraph. Withdrawal of that rejection is therefore solicited.

Substantive Rejections

Claims 1, 4-5, 8-10, and 16 stand rejected as anticipated by TSUGIMATSU 6,746,080.

Claims 4-5 and 8-9 stand rejected as anticipated by ONISHI 6,196,629.

Claims 17-18 and 20 stand rejected as obvious over TSUGIMATSU in view of VAN MONFORT 6,152,528 and YANAKA 6,672,664.

The claims have been amended taking into account the analysis and formal criticisms of the Official Action.

The amended claims are all believed patentable. Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested.

TSUGIMATSU discloses a cradle 1, a sliding base 2, and a seat body 3. The sliding base is mounted in the cradle to move in the longitudinal direction. The seat body 3 is supported for turning about an axis perpendicular to the surface of the slide base 2 on the cradle 1. See Figures 1-2 and column 4, lines 1-6.

The Official Action has not identified how the claims are being read onto the reference, at least not as to what recitations correspond to what elements.

Claim 1 recites a base provided with a lower base portion to be mounted on a seat of a vehicle, and with an upper base portion mounted, via a connection, to be lower base portion so as to freely turn with respect to the lower base portion, the connection connecting the upper and lower base portions so that the upper base portion is repositionable with respect to the lower base portion from a first position where the upper base is facing a first direction to a second position where the upper base is facing a 180 degrees opposite second direction in such a manner that repositioning the upper base portion from the first

position to the second position reverses an orientation of the upper base portion with respect to the lower base portion and, when the base is mounted in on the seat of the vehicle, a longitudinal direction of the vehicle.

The Official Action does indicate that the recited lower base portion is being read on TSUGIMATSU's cradle 1. The upper base portion would need to be disk 20 as this is the part the seat 3 is attached to and disk 20 is the only part that could be said to turning about an axis perpendicular to the surface of the slide base 2 on the cradle 1.

The disk 20 includes sliding foot 21 which extends through sliding base 2 and engages with guide structure 9. Locking pins 22 are illustrated in Figure 12.

The base 1 includes an inversion section 11 (Figure 5). As disclosed by the passage spanning columns 5-6, the inversion section 11 accommodates reversing the direction of disk 20-sliding foot 21 to reverse the direction of the seat.

Thus, the upper base portion must be the disk 20 with foot 21.

Claim 1 further recites the upper base portion of the base having an upper surface, and the seat main body being mounted on the upper surface of the upper base portion via a reclining mechanism.

Claim 1 still further recites that the seat main body has a shell which is connected to the upper base portion via the reclining mechanism.

The shell of seat 3 is not connected to the disk 20 (upper main body) by any reclining mechanism. Therefore, this feature is not anticipated.

Claim 1 even further requires that the base is provided with a bridge which is arranged so as to cover at least a portion of the shell and to be astride the shell in a lateral direction while allowing a reclining motion of the shell with respect to the upper base portion and which bridge has both ends fixed to the upper base portion, and which bridge includes a belt fixing apparatus for fixing a seat belt of the vehicle to the base is mounted to the bridge.

The bridge is not found in TSUGIMATSU.

The TSUGIMATSU cradle 1 has a standing part 12 (see column 4, line 34). The rear part of the cradle 1 is fastened to the seat of the passenger car with a lap belt 51, and the standing part 12 of the cradle 1 is fastened to the backrest of the seat with a shoulder strap 52 (see column 8, lines 40-44 and Figure 17). In order to fasten the standing part 12 to the vehicle's seat, the standing part 12 is provided with lock-off devices 53 on its front wall for fastening the shoulder straps 52 to the standing part 12 of the cradle 1 (see column 8, lines 45-48 and Figure 17). Namely, in the child car seat of TSUGIMATSU,

the cradle 1 has the lock-off devices 53 which serves as a belt fixing apparatus or a belt mounting portion to be fastened to the vehicle's seat belt, but neither the sliding base 2 nor the seat body 3 has a belt fixing apparatus or a belt mounting portion. This is a recited part of the bridge.

The Official Action considers that the cradle 1 of TSUGIMATSU corresponds to the lower base portion of claims 1 and 4. However, in claims 1 and 4, the base is provided with a lower base portion and an upper base portion, and the upper base portion is mounted so as to freely turn with respect to the lower base portion. Thus, in claim 1, the base is provided with a bridge of which both ends are fixed to the upper base portion, and a belt fixing apparatus for fixing the seat belt of the vehicle is mounted to the bridge. Namely, the belt fixing apparatus is attached to the upper base portion through the bridge.

Further, in claim 4, the upper base portion is provided with a belt mounting portion for fixing the upper base portion to the seat of the vehicle by the seat belt of the vehicle. Accordingly, in claims 1 and 4, the belt fixing apparatus or the belt mounting portion is provided on the upper base portion through the bridge rather than on the lower base portion.

If claims 1 and 4 are anticipated by TSUGIMATSU, and if the cradle 1 of TSUGIMATSU corresponds to the lower base portion as the Examiner stated, the seat body 3, which is mounted on the

cradle so as to freely turn with respect to the cradle 1, should be provided with a belt fixing apparatus or a belt mounting portion. However, as discussed above, neither a belt fixing apparatus nor a belt mounting portion is provided on the seat body 3 of TSUGIMATSU. Therefore, claims 1 and 4 are not anticipated by TSUGIMATSU, as well as sub-claims depending thereon.

With respect to claim 8, as apparent from Figure 2 of TSUGIMATSU, when the seat body 3 that has a shell form is set in a rear-facing posture, the front end of the seat body 3 is positioned forward from the rear end of the cradle 1 that serves as a base. Accordingly, it is apparent that TSUGIMATSU fails to disclose the feature of claim 8.

With respect to claim 16, the child car seat defined in claim 16 includes the feature that the belt fixing apparatus is rotatably mounted to the seat supporting portion in such a manner that the one direction is invertible with respect to a lateral direction of the vehicle. Such feature allows the belt fixing apparatus (for example, a lock-off device) to be used to fix the child car seat and the vehicle's belt is guided from. On the contrary, in the child car seat of TSUGIMATSU, there are two lock-off devices 53 on both sides of the standing portion 12, and it is apparent that each device 53 is not rotatable. Accordingly, claim 16 is not anticipated by TSUGIMATSU.

Accordingly, the recited bridge is also not anticipated.

Withdrawal of the rejections based on TSUGIMATSU is therefore solicited.

Claims 4-5 and 8-9 are not believed to be anticipated by ONISHI.

The Official Action reads lower base portion onto 1C, upper base portion onto 1B and seat main body onto 16.

Claim 4 requires the upper base portion be provided with a belt mounting portion for fixing the upper base portion to the seat of the vehicle by the seat belt of the vehicle. Element 1B does not include any belt mounting portion and therefore there is no anticipation.

In the child car seat of ONISHI, the Examiner states that the support device 1B corresponds to the upper base portion defined in claim 4. However, in the child car seat of ONISHI, the base body 1C has a seat belt fixation groove 20f for engaging the seat belt with which the vehicle is equipped (see column 8, lines 3-5 and Figure 2). It is apparent that the base body 1C is fixed on the vehicle's seat by engaging the seat belt with the seat belt fixation groove 20f, so that the seat belt fixation groove 20f serves as the belt mounting portion. Further, the support device 1B of ONISHI is provided on the base body 1C so as to freely turn with respect to the base body 1C, but no belt mounting portion is provided on the support device 1B.

On the contrary, in the child car seat defined in claim 4, the upper base portion is mounted so as to freely turn with respect to the lower base portion, and the belt mounting portion is provided on the upper base portion rather than on the lower base portion. In contrast thereto, it is apparent that the support device 1B of ONISHI does not accord with the upper base portion of the present invention. Accordingly, claim 4, as well as claim 5 depending thereon, is not anticipated by ONISHI.

With respect to claim 8, in Figure 4 of ONISHI, there is disclosed the child car seat in which the seat device 1A is turned on the rear-facing posture. It is noted that the seat belt 121 (a waist strap) is stretched just below the front end of the armrests. As explained above, the seat belt 121 is to be engaged with the seat belt fixation groove 20f provided on the base 1C, and there is a certain distance between the groove 20f and the rear end of the base 1C. Therefore, ONISHI fails to disclose the feature defined in claim 8. Accordingly, claim 8, as well as claim 9 depending thereon, is not anticipated by ONISHI.

The features of claim 21 are also not disclosed.

The Official Action states that claims 17, 18 and 20 are unpatentable over TSUGIMATSU in view of VAN MONFORT and YANAKA.

However, each of claims 17, 18 and 20 includes all features of claim 16 that is the parent claim thereof, and, as discussed above, TSUGIMATSU fails to disclose the feature of

claim 16 that the belt fixing apparatus is rotatably mounted to the rear supporting portion in such a manner that the one direction is invertible with respect to a lateral direction of the vehicle.

Further, VAN MONFORT merely discloses a child's seat in which a clamping device 5 is provided on a seat back and a belt 40 is engaged with that device 5. He keeps silent on the provision of the clamping device that is rotatable in the same manner as that of the present invention. YANAKA discloses a child car seat 10 in which a pair of belt rocking apparatuses 20 on an upper surface of a support 12, and each of the belt rocking apparatuses 20 can be operated on the front side of the seat 10 by opening a cover 1 provided on a seat body 11. However, in the child car seat of YANAKA, each belt rocking apparatus 20 is fixed on the support 12 by screws to be inserted to screw through holes 27 (see column 4, lines 46-55 and Figure 2 and 5). Thus, YANAKA fails to disclose, teach or suggest the concept of rotatably mounting the belt fixing apparatus.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it is believed that the present invention defined in claims 17, 18 and 20 is not obvious from the prior art.

In summary, none of the independent claims are anticipated for the reasons discussed above. Additionally the dependent claims are believed non-obvious as discussed above,

Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON



Roland E. Long, Jr., Reg. No. 41,949
745 South 23rd Street
Arlington, VA 22202
Telephone (703) 521-2297
Telefax (703) 685-0573
(703) 979-4709

REL/lk